funds to implement the orders of the Supreme Court for banning employment of children in hazardous industries and mines, as per Article 24 of the Constitution of India;

(b) the precise demands made by different State Governments in this regard; and

(c) the Government's response thereto, indicating the number of child labour to be rehabilitated in each State?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) In the State Labour Ministers conference held on 22.1.97, there was a general demand from all the states for financial assistance from the Central Government for giving effect to the judgement of the Supreme Court.

(c) The Central Government is already meeting full expenditure on the 76 National Child Labour Projects presently functioning in different States covering about 1.04 lakh children. While primarily it is the responsibility of the State Governments to provide necessary funds for taking up of activities in compliance of the directions of the Supreme Court, the Central Government is considering if some funds could be released at the district level for conduct of survey. The number of working children to be rehabilitated would depend on the result of the survey which is required to be completed by 10th June, 1997.

Proposal to Recast the pattern of investment of PF money

980. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to recast the pattern of investment of Provident Fund money to ensure a higher yield for PF subscribers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Central Board of Trustees is opposed to investing the Provident Fund money in the private sector; and

(d) if so, the reactions of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) A proposal for revision of the pattern of investment of the Provident Fund/Pension Fund is under consideration of the Government.

Special Reserve Fund (SRF) for payment of PF benefits

981. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Special Reserve Fund (SRF) was set up under EPF scheme for payment of PF benefits in respect of the employees employed in defaulting establishments;

(b) whether this fund has been utilised for payment of employees' and employers' share in case defaulting PSUs like JESSOP, MANC, NTC etc. registered with BIFR; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) A special Reserve Fund (SRF) has been created by the EPF Organisation so as to ensure disbursement of employees' share of PF deducted but not paid by the Unexempted Establishments to the Fund. The provisions have been further liberalised and now SRF is also utilised for payment of employees' as well as employers' share of contributions to the outgoing members of the unexempted establishments which are under liquidation or closed continuously for more than five years. The employees of NTC mills are entitled to payment of PF from the SRF as per the conditions prescribed under the scheme. M/s JESSOP & MANC are exempted establishments and as such their employees are not eligible for payment of PF from the SRF.

Representation for reforming labour laws

982. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations for reforming labour laws in our country;

(b) if so, the general nature of the demand for reform made by the trade and industry;

(c) the Government's response to it; and

(d) by when reforms are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) The Government has been receiving representations from time to time from various quarters including trade and industry to review, reformulate or amend the labour laws. Amendment to labour laws is a continuous process to be carried out with reference to problems faced in the field, keeping in view basic parametres such as labour protection, productivity increase, modernisation of industry, Social Security etc. At present Ministry of Labour has set up a Bipartite Committee consisting of representatives from Employers' Organisations and Central Trade Unions Organisations to make specific proposals for a comprehensive Industrial Relations Law.

Trade Union demand for national minimum wage for Agricultural and Unorganised Labour

983. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently received demands from Trade Union leaders to the effect that a National Minimum Wage be fixed for the agricultural and unorganised labour at Rs. 60/- per day;

(b) whether the Trade Union Leaders have also requested for free compulsory education for children and setting up of a National Labour Commission for a good industrial relations; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) The Government have received suggestions from various Trade Unions from time to time to fix national minimum wage for the agricultural and the unorganised labour and also for the setting up of National Commission on Labour.

(c) Because of the diversity of economic and geographical conditions in different regions in the country it has not been found practicable to fix a national minimum wage for the country as a whole. As an alternative, efforts are being made to reduce differences in minimum wages in contiguous regions and also to have a national floor level minimum wage.

सरकारी क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों में स्वैच्छिक सेवानिवृत्ति लेने वाले कर्मचारी

984. **श्री चीमनभाई हरीभाई शुक्ला:** क्या श्रम मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) 31 जनवरी, 1997 की स्थिति के अनुसार सरकारी क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों में कितने कर्मचारियों ने स्वैच्छिक सेवानिवृत्ति ली थी;

(ख) गुजरात में कितनी कंपनियों ने सेवा से हटाए गए अथवा सेवानिवृत्ति कर्मचारियों को भविष्य निधि तथा उपदान की राशि का भुगतान नहीं किया है, जैसाकि कर्मचारियों द्वारा क्षेत्रीय भविष्य निधि आयुक्त को शिकायत की गई है;

(ग) इसे वसूल करने के लिए भविष्य निधि प्राधिकारियों द्वारा कदम उठाए गए हैं; और

(घ) उक्त अवधि तक जिला-वार कितने कर्मचारियों को सेवानिवृत्ति लाभों का भुगतान कर दिया गया है?

श्रम मंत्री (श्री एम. अरूणाचलम): (क) से (घ) केन्द्रीय सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र उपक्रमों के 100205 कर्मचारी ऐसे थे जिन्होंने राष्ट्रीय नवीकरण निधि की सहायता से स्वैच्छिक सेवानिवृत्ति योजना का लाभ उठाया। उपदान संदाय अधिनियम, 1972 के अंतर्गत उपदान की अदायगी का दायित्व नियोजन का है। अत: जब कभी भी उपदान की अदायगी न किए जाने की शिकायतें प्राप्त होती हैं तो उन्हें समुचित कार्रवाई के लिए संबंधित मंत्रालय की जानकारी में लाया जाता है। जहां तक भविष्य निधि का संबंध है, ऐसी सूचना है कि क्षेत्रीय भविष्य निधि आयुक्त को इस संबंध में किसी शिकायत के बारे में कोई जानकारी नहीं है।

Unemployed persons registered in Employment exchanges in Punjab

985. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unemployed persons registered in different employment exchanges in State of Punjab as on 31st January, 1997; and

(b) the details of handicapped persons, SCs/STs, widows, ex-servicemen, terrorist affected persons etc., registered in the various employment exchanges of the State?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) The number of job-